

Predestination and Free will

Jn. 8:34, 44; Rom. 6:20; Titus 3:3

Freedom of Inclination and Libertarian Freedom

1. When Christians talk about freewill, there is far more assuming that their understanding of freewill is a given, in other words, that the Bible assumes freewill in the same way they assume freewill.
2. Freedom of inclination
 - a) The will is free in that man freely chooses what he chooses, that is, he is not forced or coerced in his decisions. His choices are governed by his nature or character and are expressions of his nature and character (Matt. 7:15-20).
 - b) Affirms determinism, that is, internal or external influences, shape man's choices.

“It is not the *reality* of the will that is in question, but its *independence* from the rest of our fallen nature and its *capacity* to choose autonomously against God's eternal purposes” (*No Place for Sovereignty*, Wright, 112. Italics are his).
 - c) Affirms compatibilism, which states that man's free moral agency and God's absolute sovereignty are compatible with each other (Prov. 16:9; Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28).
3. Libertarian freedom
 - a) Asserts that the will is free from all causes and influences. The will has the power of contrary choice. The will is independent and self-determining, making autonomous choices.
 - b) Denies any form of determinism - Affirms indeterminism
 - c) Denies any form of compatibilism - Asserts incompatibilism
 - d) The will is ultimately self-determining. There may be influences, but the will always rises above any conditioning factors.
 - e) The pillars of libertarian freedom are
 - (1) we experience real deliberation and choices that we make;
 - (2) that “ought” implies “can” and
 - (3) moral responsibility/accountability requires free will.
4. Does a command imply ability (i.e., libertarian freedom)?

5. What about ability?
Jer. 13:23; Jn. 6:44; 15:5; Rom. 3:10-12
6. Does the Bible actually teach free-will?
7. The insurmountable problems caused by libertarian freedom
For the Christian life, libertarian freedom is extremely problematic.

The believer in heaven

Libertarian freedom frequently leads to denials of God's omnipotence and omniscience, open theism and process theology.

Libertarian freedom thwarts prayer.

Libertarian freedom undermines predictive prophecy

Libertarian freedom undermines inspiration

"Merely to rescue a pseudofreedom attributed to humans, God is deprived of his sovereignty, the covenant of grace of its firmness, and Christ of His royal power" (Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, IV. 85).

Conclusions

1. Man's will does not operate independently from his mind or his affections.
2. Man's will does operate freely within the parameters of his own nature.
"It is not the *reality* of the will that is in question, but its *independence* from the rest of our fallen nature and its *capacity* to choose autonomously against God's eternal purposes" (Wright, 112. Italics are his).

Moral Responsibility

Isa. 10:5-19

1. The Bible teaches that man is responsible for his deeds within a compatibilist framework (Gen. 50:20; Acts 2:23)
2. We are responsible to God because He is the Creator and we are the creatures.
3. We are responsible to God because He is Holy and Just, thus He is the Lawgiver and the moral standard for all His rational creatures.

Compatibilism, not libertarian freedom, is the biblical perspective.

In salvation, the will must be freed and empowered and that happens not by the work or will of man, but by the will and grace of God.

It is God's grace overcoming our stubborn, bound wills that is the greatest gift!